

FRUIT TO ROOT EXERCISE

While the war of the mind is a personal war for everyone, it doesn't have to be an individual war. It's helpful to know that the ultimate Helper—God the Spirit—and those in your close community are in the foxholes with you, fighting on the front lines for your holiness. In chapter eight of *Gospel Fluency*, Jeff writes:

When I am teaching people how to fight with gospel truths, I introduce some cues to help them discover the aspect of the gospel they may need to press into. For instance, if someone is struggling with guilt or shame for what he been done, I encourage him to go to the cross where Jesus died and remember his words: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). We need the reminder that Jesus's death paid for all our sin, past, present, and future. He atoned for our sin, removed our guilt, and covered our shame.

If someone is struggling to overcome sin, I might encourage her to remember and believe in the resurrection, where Jesus condemned sin's power. He gives us the same power to overcome by the Spirit who raised him from the dead.

Some are dealing with feelings of inadequacy in their behavior and lean toward performance-based acceptance. If so, I direct them to remember Jesus's life, perfectly lived in their place, and the Father's words spoken over Jesus (words that are now ours in Jesus): "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17).

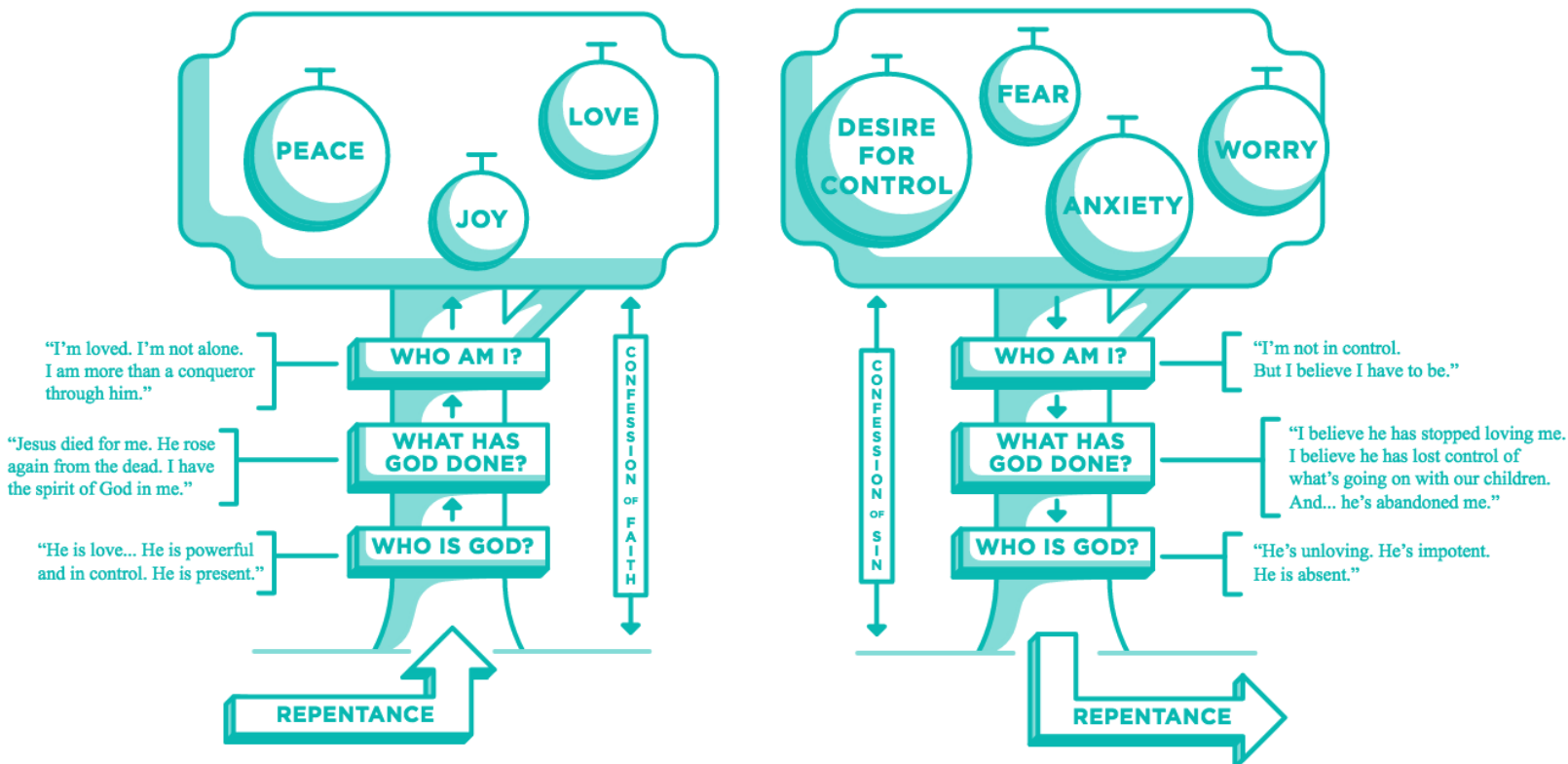
Whatever the struggle, the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus gives life, hope, and power. And by faith in Christ, every attribute, characteristic, and blessing that belongs to Jesus is available to us because of our unity with him.

In essence, fighting with gospel truths is trusting in and putting on ourselves all that is true of Jesus, and therefore also true of us in Jesus.

This week's group exercise puts that into practice as you consider going from "fruit to root" to "root to fruit" together. If your group is larger than six people, you might want to divide into groups of three or four to make sure everyone gets a chance to participate. We'll encourage you to "let your group in"—especially if there are areas you're having a hard time reconstructing right belief. It can feel shameful, but by God's design you need each other in those areas especially!

First, looking at the Tree Diagrams and considering the four questions, have each person . . .

- Share one or two areas of unbelief he or she processed on Reflection #2 and #3, along with specific ways God used that process to establish greater belief in his or her heart and mind.
- Share at least one area you need help deconstructing disbelief based on the “fruit to root” process and reconstructing right belief based on the “root to fruit” process.



After each person shares, together as a group . . .

- Celebrate God's work in each person as He worked through His Spirit to establish new areas of belief in former unbelief.
- Lovingly serve one another as you help deconstruct unbelief and reconstruct right belief in areas others need help.
- Consider if there are any commitments you need to make to help one another live consistently in light of newfound belief.

NOTE:

Next week's group exercise is sharing a meal together, and we'll encourage you to go a little "above and beyond" for that meal. Before you end tonight's group meeting, make a plan. What will you eat? Who will bring what? Will you prepare food beforehand, or will you make it together? Plan well today to get the full experience of next week's exercise!

PRAY:

Spend some time praying together for your group and for each specific person: that God would produce increasing fruit of the Spirit in each of you, that He would give you the strength—and namely His own power—as you fight the battle for your mind, and that He would grow each person's ability and ease in deconstructing disbelief and reconstructing right belief.